

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMCONSUL KARACHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7481

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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PK

SUBJECT: BALUCHISTAN--CHIEF MINISTER DENIES AHMAD

NAWAZ BUGTI ARRESTED; INAUGURATION AUGUST

24 "PROTEST MOVEMENT" POSTPONED

REF: KARACHI 1545

1. BALUCHISTAN CHIEF MINISTER JAM GHULAM QADIR IN PRESS CONFERENCE AFTERNOON AUGUST 23 DENIED THAT PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT HAD ARRESTED NAP MPA AHMAD NAWAZ BUGTI (REFTEL) AND SAID THAT AS FAR AS HE KNEW HE HAD NOT BEEN ARRESTED BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. CHIEF MINISTER ALSO ANNOUNCED POSTPONEMENT OF WEEK VISIT TO BALUCHISTAN BY PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO SCHEDULED TO START AUGUST 26, VOICED HIS GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER AT ALL COSTS AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE PEOPLE OF PROVINCE THEMSELVES WOULD FRUSTRATE THE OPPOSITION'S AGITATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

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2. UDF REPRESENTATIVE IN QUETTA, INDEPENDENT MNA

SHERBAZ KHAN MAZARI AT A LATER PRESS CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED THAT PLANNED AUGUST 24 "PROTEST MOVEMENT" (REFTEL) DEFERRED UNTIL INSTRUCTIONS OBTAINED FROM THE CENTRAL UDF BODY. MAZARI ALSO CONTRADICTED CHIEF MINISTER'S STATEMENT AHMAD NAWAZ BUGTI NOT ARRESTED STATING AHMAD NAWAZ ARRESTED 6:00 A.M. AUGUST 23 UNDER WARRANTS ISSUED UNDER THE PAKISTAN PENAL CODE AND DEFENSE OF PAKISTAN RULES. ACCORDING TO MAZARI, AHMAD NAWAZ FLOWN FROM QUETTA TO DERA BUGTI, HEAD-QUARTERS OF BUGTI TRIBE, IN A HELICOPTER ACCOMPANIED BY HIS NEPHEW SALIM BUGTI, SON OF GOVERNOR BUGTI. MAZARI POINTED OUT FIVE NAP MPA'S -- MENGAL, MARRI, GUL KHAN NASEER, NAWABZADA SHER ALI KHAN AND AHMAD NAWAZ -- CURRENTLY UNDER ARREST AND WARRANT OUT FOR 6TH NAP MPA ABDUR RAHMAN.

3. COMMENT: IT IS BASICALLY A QUESTION OF SEMANTICS WHETHER AHMAD NAWAZ BUGTI WAS ARRESTED, DETAINED OR TAKEN INTO CUSTODY. HE WILL REMAIN OUT OF CIRCULATION AS LONG AS THE PROVINCIAL OR CENTRAL AUTHORITIES DESIRE. THERE HAS BEEN SOME CONFUSION AS TO THE NATURE OF THE PROGRAM THE UDF PLANNED TO MOUNT ON AUGUST 24. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT MAZARI'S DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THE UDF HAS IN MIND AS A "PROTEST MOVEMENT" IS MORE APPROPRIATE THAN "CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT" WHICH IS BURDENED BY ITS IDENTIFICATION WITH THE UNHAPPY EVENTS OF MARCH 1971 IN THEN EAST PAKISTAN AND ITS GANDHIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.
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